

إِن الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

*A Journal of Islamic Renaissance
in America*

In This Issue:

**The Islamic Response to
A Call from the Vatican**

Islam and the Freedom of Belief —

Mohammad, the Benefactor of Women

Prophecies in the Quran

The Mystical Moses

VOLUME XLIX

April 1982

NUMBER 2

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

A Journal of the Islamic Renaissance in America

The Muslim Sunrise is a quarterly magazine, founded in 1921 by Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first Muslim missionary in the U.S.A. The magazine is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (1835-1908). The Movement is currently headed by Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad - third successor - with Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan. The Movement aims at presenting to the world the true meaning and teachings of Islam. The American Headquarters of the Movement are located at the Fazl Mosque, 2141 Leroy Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

Editor in Chief:

Khalil Ahmad Nasir Ph.D.

Managing Editor:

Mubasher Ahmed, M.A., LL.B.

Associate Editors:

Dr. Muhammad Abbas

Dr. M.H. Sajid

Dr. Bashiruddin Usama

All correspondence in regards to the contents of the Muslim Sunrise may be directly addressed to the editor at 30 Somerset Place, Syosset, L.I., N.Y. 11791.

All other correspondence, including subscriptions, should be addressed to the publishers:

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam
2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008



THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

*A Journal of Islamic
Renaissance in America*

Volume XLIX

APRIL 1982

NUMBER 2

CONTENTS

A Passage from the Holy Quran	1
Sayings of the Holy Prophet	3
Editorial: The Islamic Response to a Call from the Vatican	4
Islam and the Freedom of Belief Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan	8
Mohammad, the Benefactor of Women Alhaj A.U. Kaleem	16
Prophecies in the Quran Dr. Hussain M. Sajid	32
The Mystical Moses Rafi Yahya A. Sharif	42
Current Topics: Islam and Politics	49
Why Christmas Got Moved from Spring	53

A Passage From the Holy Quran

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَانًا ۚ إِنَّمَا يَبْغُ عَنْكَ الْكِبَرُ أَحَدٌ هُمَا أَوْ
كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا آيٌ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا
قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣٦﴾

وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ
رَبِّ اَرْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَّبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا ﴿٣٧﴾
وَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي نُفُوسِكُمْ ۚ إِن تَكُونُوا صَالِحِينَ
فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلْأَوَّابِينَ غَفُورًا ﴿٣٨﴾

وَأْتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْيَسِيرَ وَالْإِسْكَانَ
وَلَا تُبْذِرْ تَبَذُّرًا ﴿٣٩﴾

إِنَّ الْبُذْرَ رَيْنٌ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ وَكَانَ
الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾

وَأَمَّا تَعْرِضْنَ عَنْهُمْ ۖ اٰتِغَاءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ
تَرْجُوهُنَّ أَفْعَلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مِّسُورًا ﴿٤١﴾

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا
كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا ﴿٤٢﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُ
كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٤٣﴾

Translation

Thy Lord has commanded that ye worship none but Him and has enjoined benevolence towards parents. Should either or both of them attain old age in thy lifetime, never say: Ugh; to them nor chide them, but always speak gently to them. Be humbly tender with them and pray: Lord, have mercy on them even as they nurtured me when I was little. Your Lord knows best that which is in your minds; if you will be righteous, then surely He is Most Forgiving towards those who turn constantly to Him. Render to the kinsman his due and the needy and the wayfarer, and squander not thy substance extravagantly, for the extravagant fall into evil company and misuse the bounties of their Lord. On occasions when thou must turn away from any of those who should be the objects of thy benevolence, while seeking thy Lord's mercy for which thou hopest, then speak kindly to them. Do not hold back altogether out of miserliness and render thyself blameworthy, nor spend without restraint and exhaust thy substance, thus becoming thyself an object of charity. Thy Lord enlarges His provision for whom He wills, and straitens it for whom He wills. He is well-aware of all that relates to His servants and sees it all.

(SURA: BANI ISRAEL, 24-31)

Sayings of the Holy Prophet

For every Ummah there is a special trial and the special trial for my Ummah is wealth.

§

No two wolves let loose in a flock of goats can devour the goats so ravenously as the greed of a man for wealth and fame does his faith.

§

Whoso introduced an evil and unlawful way bears his own sins and the sin of those who follow it.

§

Whoso acquired knowledge with the object of gaining access to men of world and attracted the hearts of men to himself in order to gain respect from them neither the obligatory nor the optional prayers, acts, etc. of such a man will be accepted on the Day of Judgment.

Editorial:

The Islamic Response To A Call From The Vatican

At the blessed occasion of the celebration of the breaking of the fast after the last month of Ramadhan, a most welcome call came from the spiritual center of several hundred million Catholic Christians of the world. Issued by the Archbishop Jean Jadot, Pro-President of the Vatican Secretariat, it addressed the Muslims of the entire world. This open invitation noted the fact that this was the first feast of the breaking of the fast in the fifteenth century of the Hegira, the Islamic calendar.

Addressing the Muslims as "Brother believers", the letter invited them to "give thanks to the God who is One and Merciful" together. It says:

"On this joyous occasion, permit us to express to you, our brother believers, our sense of esteem for your testimony of submission to God, and for your piety. His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, has spoken of this fidelity to the Muslim communities which he has had the pleasure of greeting during his travels. Your devotion to God is encouraging, in a world which seems more and more forgetful of its Creator, and which seems to direct its gaze only downwards towards the earth."

Further, the Archbishop says,

"Does not our common purpose, of respect for the designs of Divine Providence, constitute a pressing invitation to work together to save man and his values from materialism? There are many among

you who have such thoughts, as we do. Refugees, immigrants, minorities, the weak, the poor, and all those left alone by our world - all these await us."

The Vatican message concludes with the following moving words:

"Conscious of our differences, let us work together with mutual respect for each other's convictions, rejecting the prejudices that are at the source of so many tensions, so that we can build a world of justice and mercy, in which man can give glory to God, the Creator."

The Vatican's message has come at a very historic time. Never before had mankind become so concerned about the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor, the developed and the developing, and the material and the spiritual forces of the world. On the one hand, the North-South dialogue seems to be floundering aimlessly; on the other, the world is falling deeper and deeper in the clutches of materialism, thus closing its eyes from the spiritual values and communion with God.

From the Islamic point of view, the beginning of the fifteenth century of the Islamic calendar marks a very important landmark in its history. Many prophecies in the Islamic scriptures lead the Muslims to believe that a period of universal spiritual renaissance and return to the unity of God may have already been ushered. Certainly there is a definite universal thirst for the life-giving divine guidance in these times of darkness and despair.

With deep appreciation for the Vatican's message, we sincerely welcome it. Indeed, to the Muslims it is a reminder that a historic invitation was for the first time extended more than fourteen hundred years ago in the sacred gospel of Islam, the Holy Quran. Addressing all "People of the Book", the Christians and the Jews, a call went forth everywhere as follows:

"Say to the People of the Book: Let us agree upon one matter which is the same for you and for us, namely, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for lords besides Allah." (3:65)

Thus, the Holy Quran proposed that an affirmation of belief in One God, The Lord, The Creator, and the Sustainer of all universes was a basic common denominator which could positively and staunchly unify the Muslims and all other "People of the Book". Only a true conviction in the Oneness of our Creator can provide the proper atmosphere towards resolving all other differences - racial, economic, and theological. Once the mankind recognizes that we are all children of the One Lord, a firm basis for bridging the gap between the rich and the poor, the weak and the mighty, the privileged and the underprivileged will be established.

The Holy Quran has repeatedly called for a reconciliation between the followers of different faiths. According to Islam, the ingredients of this friendship and cooperation are mutual respect and honor founded on a basis of righteousness. For example:

"Surely, those who have believed, the Jews, and the Christians, whoso believes in God and the Last Day, and acts righteously, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve." (5:70)

For our Christian brethren, the message of reconciliation comes with even greater emphasis based on the fact that the prophets of the Bible as well as the revelations they received is an integral part of the Islamic teachings. The Holy Quran requires belief in the truth and the righteousness of all these prophets. The Torah and revelations that come to Jesus are affirmed by the Holy Quran as the sources of guidance and light. (5:45-47)

The life of the Holy Prophet provides us abundant examples of friendly cooperation and frank dialogue with the Christian communities of the period. In the early years of his ministry in Mecca, his followers became targets of relentless persecution by his enemies. Finally, the Holy Prophet directed a number of Muslims to leave for the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia (today's Ethiopia) to seek asylum under its monarch, Negus. The enemies of Islam sent a delegation to the king to demand the return of this small band of the victims of persecution. They even tried to provoke the king, Negus, by telling him that these Muslims did not believe in the divinity of Jesus. On the monarch's inquiry to the Muslim refugees, a healthy dialogue developed. The followers of Muhammad stated their belief in Jesus as:

"We say about him that which our Prophet taught, that Jesus is the servant of God, and His Apostle, and His Word, which he cast into Mary, the Virgin."

King Negus found this reply totally satisfactory. Rejecting the demand of the Meccan enemies of The Holy Prophet, he permitted the Muslims to live in peace in his kingdom. The Islamic view of Jesus furnished firm grounds on which the followers of two faiths could live peacefully together in spite of the obvious theological differences.

We welcome the Vatican's invitation to the Islamic world to join with their brothers, the People of the Book, in the Unity of God and utmost cooperation between them toward the service of mankind. The hand of sincere friendship was extended by Prophet Muhammad of Islam fourteen hundred years ago. We are gratified that Islam's call has now been joined by Pope John Paul II. Let both hands unite.

Let us hope and pray that Muslims and Christians, indeed the whole world, will respond to the call of The Holy Quran and the Vatican. It may be one last hope of mankind.

Khalil Nasir

Islam And The Freedom Of Belief

by

Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan
Former President,
International Court Of Justice

The world is in turmoil. It presents a succession of perplexing paradoxes. While the reach of man's intellect is momentarily soaring beyond undreamt of heights, science and technology rapidly scoring triumph after triumph, moral and spiritual values are in ruin. Mankind appears to be afflicted with a spiritual malaise. What is wrong? Where is the remedy to be sought? The fundamental cause is man's alienation from God; the remedy obviously is a genuine, humble, sincere return to God, the One, the Most Supreme, without associate.

In our own generation a group of American Christian clerics formulated its creed as: God is dead. They affirmed: God has died as a historical fact in our own age. Bishop Robinson, of the Anglican persuasion, in his book **Honest To God**, published a decade ago, argued and set forth the thesis: There is no God outside of us; the center of our being is the only God. No exception to this was voiced by the authorities of the Church of England. A short while after the publication of **Honest To God** a world conference of Anglican Bishops was convened at Lambeth Palace. The conference divided itself into a score of committees. One of the committees was called upon to study and report on the Presentation of Christianity in Modern Terms. Bishop Robinson was appointed Chairman of this committee!

The House of Islam is in complete disarray. Political dissensions apart, Muslim divines are occupied with

quibbling over niceties of doctrine and tedious attempts at reconciliation of juristic differences. No one seems concerned with the promotion of true spirituality. The scene reminds one forcefully of the warning of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him: A time is sure to come when of Islam will be left only its name, and of the Quran only its words. Their mosques will overflow with worshippers but will be bereft of true guidance. Their divines will be the most wicked of creation under the vault of heaven. Every mischief will originate with them and will revert to them (**Mishkat**, Babul Fitan).

The misinterpretations of orthodox divines have brought Islam into contempt and made it the laughing-stock of sensible people. One example may be cited as illustration. The most precious freedom of man, which is vital for the purpose of enabling him to achieve the object of his life on earth, is the freedom of conscience, which includes freedom to profess, practice, propagate and, should his conscience so impel him, to change his religion. Islam is the one religion whose scripture, the Holy Quran, proclaims freedom of conscience and belief in express and emphatic terms, as is said: There shall be no compulsion in religion, for guidance and error have been clearly distinguished (2:257). This freedom is so repeatedly affirmed in the Holy Quran, with such a wealth of illustration and exposition, as leaves not the least room for doubt on the matter. This is one of the many outstanding proofs of the truth of Islam. Yet a large section of orthodox Muslim divines have progressively adopted the position that though Islam does not permit any kind of pressure or coercion in its propagation and no one may under any circumstances be forced or compelled to profess belief in Islam, a professing Muslim, should he cease to have faith in Islam, would not be free to affirm that he no longer believes in Islam. Should he do so, he would forfeit his life. This is a notion utterly abhorrent to Islam, and indeed to human conscience. It renders altogether nugatory the freedom of conscience and belief so emphatically proclaimed by the

Holy Quran and is contradictory of it. If the position were that which these misguided divines seek to uphold, Islam would be guilty of promoting hypocrisy and would not be a true religion.

It needs to be pointed out that Islam is not indifferent in the matter of faith and belief. It attaches vital importance to them, both in respect of life here and life hereafter. The Holy Quran makes a detailed exposition of the vast and permanent beneficence that is generated by true faith, and repeatedly warns in most emphatic terms of the bereavement imported by lack or rejection of true faith. But it permits no compulsion of any kind, either way, in the sphere of faith and belief. Man is absolutely free in making his choice, and must face the consequences of his choice, as is said:

Proclaim, O Prophet: O mankind, the Truth has indeed come to you from your Lord; then whoso follows the guidance, follows it only for the good of his own self, and whoso errs does so only to his own detriment. I am not appointed a keeper over you (10:109).

Again:

Proclaim, O Prophet: This is the Truth from your Lord; then let him who so wills, believe, and let him who so wills, disbelieve (18:30).

Every sensible person would appreciate that these directives are clear and emphatic on freedom of conscience and belief. But the erring orthodox divines are not satisfied. They profess that everyone is free to believe or to disbelieve; but they hold that no one who has once believed is ever free **thereafter** to **profess** disbelief. Should he cease to believe and dare to **announce** his disbelief he would forfeit his life! This is the type of sophistry that has wrought so much harm in the domain of religion, and is responsible for generating

aversion towards religion on so wide a scale in our age. But the Holy Quran repels it emphatically. Consider the following:

The works of those from among you who turn back from their faith and die in a state of disbelief shall be vain in this world and the next (2:218).

There is no secular penalty for turning back from the faith. The offense is spiritual, the penalty is also spiritual.

Surely, those who have turned away after guidance has been made manifest to them have been deceived by Satan who has beguiled them with false hopes (47:26).

O ye who believe, whoso from among you turns back from his religion let him remember that in his stead Allah will soon bring a people whom He will love and who will love Him (5:55).

Whoso disbelieves in Allah after he has believed, ... on him is Allah's wrath and he shall have a grievous punishment (16:107).

The spiritual offense involved is grave, and the spiritual penalty is also grievous, but there is no secular penalty.

How shall Allah guide a people who have disbelieved after having believed, and who had borne witness that the Messenger is true, and to whom clear proofs had come. Allah guides not the wrong-doers. Of such the punishment is that on them shall be the curse of Allah and of the angels and of men, all together; thereunder shall they abide. Their punishment shall not be lightened nor shall they be granted respite, except in the case of those who repent thereafter and amend. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful (3:87-90).

Those who disbelieve after having believed and continue to advance in disbelief, their repentance would not be accepted. Those are they who have gone utterly astray (3:91).

Those who believe, then disbelieve, then again believe, then disbelieve and thereafter go on increasing in disbelief, Allah will never forgive them, nor guide them to any way of deliverance (4:138).

Do these verses leave the least room for doubt that change of faith attracts no secular penalty whatever? If any apostate from Islam commits a secular offense he would be liable to suffer the penalty prescribed by law for such offense. Should that offense be punishable with death, he would be condemned to death for it, irrespective of his apostacy and not because of his apostacy.

The heinousness of these benighted divines does not stop there. They are not content with passing sentence upon those who having believed in Islam declare that they no longer believe in it. Their doing so is an enormity, as we have demonstrated, but they go further and arrogate to themselves the authority to determine whether a person while professing belief in Islam has nevertheless ceased to be a Muslim because of some doctrinal difference with them of which they disapprove, and has thus forfeited his life! There is no limit to their crass effrontery and insufferable arrogance.

Another very important aspect of this matter is that as Islam constantly invites non-Muslims to enter its fold, every non-Muslim who accepts that invitation necessarily repudiates his original belief to the extent to which it is inconsistent with Islam and subscribes wholeheartedly to Islam. Thus he becomes an apostate in the estimation of his quondam co-religionists. If the penalty of apostacy from Islam were death, would it be

unreasonable for other faiths also to impose the same dread penalty for apostacy from those faiths? That would mean that no change of faith would be permissible under any circumstances and everyone must continue to adhere to the doctrines and teachings of the faith into which he may chance to be born. The accident of birth would determine everyone's belief and freedom of conscience would become a myth.

Further, in such a state of affairs, if a follower of one faith were to be convinced of the truth of another faith, he would be under compulsion to continue to give lip-service to the doctrines of the faith into which he had been born, though he would have ceased to believe in them. In other words he would be a hypocrite. The Holy Quran condemns hypocrisy in the strongest terms, as is said: The hypocrites shall surely be in the lowest region of the Fire (4:146).

This is only one instance of the depths to which Muslim orthodox religious thinking is contemporaneously sunk. It is most unfortunate that in several Muslim states the revival of Islam is being sought in accord with the misguidance of divines nurtured in the type of doctrine of which we have set forth an illustration. In other Muslim states man-conceived remedies, theories and isms are being successively adopted, adapted and tried in the effort of pulling their peoples out of the trough of despond into which they are steadily slithering deeper.

If Islam, as it truly claims, is an ever-living faith, the true and effective remedy of all ills, physical, moral, spiritual, in all spheres of life, social, economic, political, must be furnished from within Islam; and so indeed it is. Unfortunately, the bulk of the Muslims instead of subordinating their thinking and conduct to the guidance set out in the Holy Quran, seek to subordinate the Holy Quran to their thinking. Instead of looking to heaven for guidance, they have firmly closed the heavenly gates of guidance by denying the possibility of revelation in this age. They read in the Holy Quran:

On those who affirm: Our Lord is Allah; and then remain steadfast, angels descend, reassuring them: Fear not, nor grieve, and rejoice in the garden that you were promised. We are your friends in this life and in the hereafter. Therein you will have all that you desire, and therein you will have all that you ask for, an entertainment from the Most Forgiving, the Ever Merciful (41:31-33).

But they put it aside as having reference only to the hereafter. They construe 'garden' as limited to paradise, whereas the bounties mentioned here are promised both in this life and in the hereafter. The descent of angels (revelation) mentioned in this verse is obviously experienced in this life. There is also the assurance: For him who fears to stand before his Lord there are two gardens (55:47); meaning one here and one hereafter.

No divine attribute is ever suspended. God speaks today as He spoke of yore. He sends His guidance today as He sent it in ages past. There is the promise:

We will surely guide in Our ways those who strive after Us. Verily Allah is with those who do their duty to the utmost (29:70).

For close upon a century all this has been progressively demonstrated in the rise and progress of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Today there is no longer any need to get involved in controversies over niceties of doctrinal points. God's witness furnishes conclusive proof. Let those who are gifted with insight reflect over that evidence. It has been truly said: A tree is known by its fruits. The tree of Ahmadiyyat has already achieved a wondrous flourishing. Its root is firm and its branches reach into heaven. It brings forth fresh fruit at all times by the command of its Lord (14:25-26). In contrast the tree of its opponents is uprooted from the earth and has no stability (14:27). The seed sown by the Holy Founder of the Movement sent forth its sprout, then made it strong, so that it has become thick and stands firm on its stem (48:30).

The number of the members of the Movement already exceeds ten million, and is increasing daily. Branches of the Movement are strung around the globe. Members are required to illustrate in their lives all the social, moral and spiritual values inculcated by Islam, of which the highest example was furnished in the life of the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace be on him. They are drawn from every walk of life, are practical people pursuing the whole range of beneficent activities as laid down by Islam. They are not cranks, recluses or ascetics who reject the normal values of life; they have set enviable examples of full, successful and highly beneficent lives. The distinguishing feature of their lives is the upholding of the moral and the spiritual above the physical and the material in a pattern of beneficent co-ordination. Even when their lot is cast among crime-ridden and corrupt societies they lead orderly, peaceful and law-abiding lives.

As taught by Islam, they believe that the faculties and capacities bestowed upon them by God Almighty are a precious bounty and should be beneficently developed and exercised at their proper time and occasion, and are not to be suppressed or stultified. They believe that everything bestowed upon man has a beneficent purpose which should be sought to be achieved at the highest level. The moral and spiritual code to which they seek to conform imposes no handicap upon them. Indeed it enables them to live their lives at a high level of beneficent activity, much above the average standard of life of those around them. They have an outstanding record of service to their fellow beings, without any discrimination whatever. By the grace and mercy of Allah there have already appeared among them numerous persons who have achieved high eminence in various spheres of human life.

The future surely belongs to those who have firm faith in their Maker, through experience of Him, and who hold fast to His rope in steadfastness and tread along the straight path that leads to Him.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Muhammad, The Benefactor Of Women

by

Alhaj A. U. Kaleem

It is a source of deep gratification for the Muslims to realize that the spiritual values given by Islam can sustain them through the endless change and counterchange of concepts and prospectives in which science and technology seem continually to be jostling our rules of intelligibility.

In the world of today which is shattered into pieces and is running towards another world war, we should think of the greatest lover of peace - the Holy Prophet and let everybody know how he brought chaotic Arabia to a peaceful state of life, and what principles he had laid for the establishment of the lasting peace. In the world of today which is hankering after more and more of knowledge, let us tell the world what the Holy Prophet thought of knowledge and how much stress did he lay on the acquisition of knowledge. In the world of today where stories like those of Little Rock, and problems of discriminatory legislation like those of South Africa, let us present the Holy Prophet Muhammad who brought the racial pride of the Arabs to the dust, through whose teachings the distinction between Arab and Non-Arab - similar to what existed elsewhere between Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and Barbarians was brutally divested of the halo of hoary antiquity. In the world of today, which is fast losing sense of value for good morals, let us convey to mankind what moral meant to the Holy Prophet and how did he inculcate them in himself and in others. In the world of today where family stability is going to pieces let us talk of the Holy Prophet and show the world what he said and did in this respect.

In short, in the world of today, we should look at the Holy Prophet Muhammad and from his life and teachings we should get the guidance to live a better life and leave a better world behind us.

Today the faith the Holy Prophet revealed claims the allegiance of more than eight hundred million souls, but his principles and precepts are no longer followed with that courage and devotion that once made the Muslims the deliverers of mankind. We should recount his life and teachings, recall his noble qualities and make them our guides in the very phases of our lives. It is then and then alone that Muslims could have their lost heritage and regain their past glory.

The condition of women before Islam was miserable throughout the world. No religion allowed them equality. No religion gave them share in the property of their parents and husbands. Woman was looked upon as evil and an unwanted burden, a source of disgrace and humiliation to the family. Women were universally treated as chattel. Their own consent in anything was considered immaterial. In fact, they were never viewed as a party to the marriage. They could be had at pleasure and discarded most capriciously. In Arabia particularly, immediately before Islam, their plight was simply miserable. They were not regarded as human beings; women stood somewhere between the animal world and man. But the Benefactor, who in an age when no country, no system, no community gave any right to women, who in a country where the birth of a daughter was considered a calamity and even some tribes used to bury their daughters alive, made secure for the fair sex rights which only unwillingly and under pressure, are being conceded to Western women in the twentieth century by the civilized nations, certainly deserves the gratitude of humanity. If the Holy Prophet Muhammad had done nothing more than his emancipation of woman and elevating her status, his claim to be the greatest benefactor of mankind would have been indisputable.

Before describing the status given to women by Islam and its Holy Founder Muhammad, it would be worthwhile to have a glimpse at previous practices regarding her position.

GREEK CIVILIZATION

Starting with Greek civilization, perhaps the oldest in the world, the concept of women can be summed up in these words of Socrates. He says: "Woman is the greatest source of chaos and disruption in the world. She is like the dafali tree which outwardly looks very beautiful but if sparrows eat it they die without fail."

Anderosky gives the Greek conception of woman in these words. He says, "Cure is possible for fire-burn and snake-bite but it is impossible to arrest woman's subtlety."

CHINESE CIVILIZATION

In Chinese scriptures women have been called the "waters of woe" that wash away all good fortune. In Chinese life the woman had always been regarded as inferior to man and she was conceded no rights whatsoever. A man could, whenever he pleased, repudiate his wife; he could sell his wife as a concubine. After widowhood she remained the property of her husband's family and it was almost impossible for her to remarry.

HINDUISM

Woman met a similar fate in Hinduism. And the doctrine of **Niyog** is in fact a brutal insult to pure womanhood and must excite the indignation of all those who desire the progress of morality as also of many honest thinkers even from the Hindus. It shocks one to hear the advocates of **Niyog** telling men that in the absence of a male offspring the wife should pollute herself with a stranger so that haply she may give birth to a son. No chaste woman would ever bear such insult. A

Hindu marriage is indissoluble. Neither adultery nor prostitution nor degeneration could ever dissolve a Hindu marriage. Even after the death of the husband widows could not claim separation. The cruel rite of "Sati" was practiced by which the widow of a Hindu used to burn herself on the pyre of her deceased husband. The widow was and is still looked upon as something loathsome, inauspicious, and fit to be shunned. The status of those widows who did not perform Sati was so disgraceful that the poor souls considered it much better to be burned alive than bearing long and inhuman torture at the hands of a cruel and unsympathetic society.

Prof. Indra in her book **Status of Women in Mahabharata** writes:

There is no creature more sinful than woman. Woman is burning fire. She is the sharp edge of a razor. She is verily all these things in a body. Men should not love them . . .

In Hinduism, according to the ordinance of Manu, "a woman must never seek independence and must never do anything according to her mere pleasure." The law of Hinduism is "By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one nothing must be done independently, even in her own house." (Manu 5:147) "In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons, a woman must never be independent." (Manu 5:148)

Sir R. G. Bhandarder comments:

The Bhagvat Geeta expression to the general belief that it is only a sinful soul that is born as woman.

BUDDHISM

As regard Buddhism, the teaching that Nirvana (salvation) cannot be attained in the company of woman is sufficiently eloquent to give us a clue to its attitude

towards this sex. The idea of a wedlock and its attendant worldly life is opposed to the ultimate end of Buddhism - the annihilation of desire . . . the striving for which necessarily involves celibacy. (U. May Oung, **Buddhist Law**, Part 1, P. 2)

To a follower of Buddhism, therefore, according to the celebrated historian Westermarck:

Women are, of all the snares which the tempter has spread for men, the most dangerous; in women are embodied all the powers of infatuation which **bind** the mind of the world.

The conception of woman in Buddhism is summed up in the words of a renowned Buddhist scholar recorded by Bettany in his "World's Religions", in the following words:

Unfathomably deep, like a fish's course in the water, is the character of woman raved with many artifices, with whom truth is hard to find, to whom a lie is like the truth and the truth is like a lie.

JUDAISM

In Judaism, according to Hebrew Scriptures, the woman is under an eternal Divine curse. "Of the woman came the beginning sin and through her we all die," is a belief which holds poor woman responsible for all the wickedness of man. Hence, her degradation in Jewish society, where she was considered not as a creature worthy of honor, but as one who could be deservedly subjected to any amount of insults, and reduced to the position of a mere chattel in the house.

CHRISTIANITY

To come to Christianity, the whole structure of the Christian creed is based on the doctrine of Original Sin for which Christianity holds woman responsible:

The woman whom thou hast gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat. (**Genesis 3:12**)

Eve first committed the sin and caused the fall of Adam; thus actually she was responsible for the sin of humanity and God had to send His "only begotten son", Jesus Christ, to be crucified and to wash off the sins of humanity with his blood! This is the summary of the Christian faith.

I present a few quotations taken from the New Testament itself, which alone should, without any comment whatsoever, be sufficient to show what woman in Christianity is, and how she should be shunned by those who are candidates to the Kingdom of Heaven:

It is good for a man not to touch a woman (1 Corinthians 7:1). For I would that all men were even as I myself (i.e., unmarried) . . . I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I (i.e., unmarried). But if they cannot contain, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn. (1 Cor. 7:7-9).

Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife. (1 Cor. 7:27).

He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. (1 Cor. 7:32-33)

He that giveth her not in marriage, doeth better. (1 Cor. 7:38)

St. Paul, the premier saint of Christendom, proclaims:

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed then Eve. And Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in transgression.

In fact, the builders of the Christian Church, as the early Fathers might be called, all vied in their

denunciation of woman. She was described as "the organ of the devil", "the foundation of the arms of devil whose voice is the hissing of the serpents", "a scorpion ever ready to sting, and the lance of the demon", "an instrument which the Devil uses to gain possession of our souls", "the gate of the Devil", "the road of iniquity, the sting of the scorpion", "an unclean thing", "a daughter of falsehood, a sentinel of Hell, the enemy of peace, (and) of the wild beasts the most dangerous", by St. Bernard, St. Anthony, St. Bonaventure, St. Cyprian, St. Jeromean and St. John Dama seen respectively.

ISLAM AND WOMAN

Having seen how cruelly woman had been treated and mercilessly exploited by different religions and secular cultures of the world, it will now be possible for us to understand correctly how the Holy Prophet Muhammad appeared as benefactor for woman and what glorious achievements of Islam are in this direction. To deal with this important subject I shall keep myself confined to the Heavenly Scripture of Islam i.e., the Holy Quran and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as interpreted by the Reformer of the Age Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. It is indeed a matter of the primary importance that everybody who believes in any sacred scripture as the revealed word of God should not in expounding the doctrine of that religion, go out of the Holy Book or depend upon arguments other than those which that book furnishes. Such a limitation would go far to simplify any dissertation upon a religion. It is so, that is may well be understood that it is the religion of Islam which confers such rights on woman and not the society which has afterwards been evolved by it as is the case with other religions.

Islam is the unique religion in this respect to endow woman with equal rights and to put her on the same level

with man. The Holy Quran emphasizes that God in His perfect wisdom has created all species in pairs, and so men and women have been created of the same species; as is said:

O mankind, be mindful of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the two created and spread many men and women. (4:2)

He it is Who has created you from a single soul and made therefrom its mate, so that the male might incline towards the female and find comfort in her. (7:190)

Of His Signs it is that He has created mates for you of your own kind that you may find peace of mind through them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect. (30:22)

These verses show that the Holy Quran has given woman same status as has been given to man as it says that they are from the same origin as are men, and due to this fact they should not be dealt with harshly and roughly, rather men should deal with them in a very mild and soft manner. The Holy Prophet Muhammad has been reported to have said ALAIKUM BIL QAWAREER - "The women should be taken care of as someone takes care of glass products. Glass is liable to break very easily if it is not taken care of, so is the delicacy in woman, and men must be careful not to injure her delicacy, because in her delicacy lies her beauty. Islam denounced the assertion of Christian Fathers that woman did not possess a soul. Woman's spiritual equality with man is repeatedly stressed in the Holy Quran. For instance it is said:

Enter into Paradise ye and your wives, honoured and happy. (43:71)

Whoso acts righteously, whether male or female and is a believer, We will surely grant him a pure

life; and We will surely bestow on such their reward according to the best of their works. (16:98)

For men who submit themselves wholly to Allah, and women who submit themselves wholly to Him and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey Allah and women who obey Him, and men who are truthful and women who are truthful, and men who are steadfast and women who are steadfast, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember Him, Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward. (33:36)

Allah will turn in mercy to believing men and believing women; Allah is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful. (33:74)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad refuted the Biblical assertion, that woman was first deceived and she was, therefore, responsible for the Fall of Adam. The Holy Quran declared in the most unambiguous terms that Adam and Eve were deceived simultaneously and were, therefore, equally responsible for the deed. It says:

'O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden and eat ye (both) therefrom plentifully wherever you will, but approach not this tree, lest you be of the wrongdoers. But Satan caused them both to slip by means of it and drove them out of the state in which they were. (2:36-37)

Men and women are afforded equal protection. For instance, the Holy Quran says:

Those who malign believing men and believing women for that which they have not done, shall bear the guilt of a calumny and a manifest sin. (33:59)

Those who persecute the believing men and believing women, and then do not repent, will surely suffer the chastisement of hell, and the chastisement of burning. (85:11)

Women being more vulnerable than men are accorded special protection. The Holy Quran says:

Those who accuse chaste unwary, believing women are cursed in this world and the hereafter; and for them is a grievous chastisement, on the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet shall bear witness against them as to that which they used to do. (24:24-25)

Men and women are spiritually akin one to another and are equally the recipients of God's favors and bounties, but their functions are not identical. In view of this diversity there is a corresponding diversity between their respective faculties and capacities. This is indicated in the Holy Quran as is said:

Our Lord is He Who has endowed everything with its appropriate faculties and then guided it to their proper use. (20:51)

God has fashioned mankind according to the nature designed by Him; there is no altering the creation of Allah. (30:31)

Islam believes in the principle of the division of labor. It allots the strenuous work and hard outdoor life to man and makes him responsible for the maintenance of the family. It regards home as the first concern of woman. It allots the work of managing the home and upbringing and training of children to woman - a work which forms the most important item in the task of nation-building. It exhorts her to engage herself in the cultivation of learning and allows her to participate, when necessary, in social uplift and other schemes of national reconstruction. The life of the office and factory, it considers as uncongenial

and unnatural for her, and is emphatic in its demands that women should in no case step into the shoes of men, nor should man encroach upon her sphere of activity. Vain and ruinous are all attempts to convert men into women and to convert women into men. Each has his or her appropriate function, the due discharge of which constitutes the dignity, enjoyment, fulfillment and beauty of life. A contemplation of the diversity of the faculties of males and females reveals the diversity of their function as designed by nature. For instance, woman is well equipped for child bearing, while man is incapable of it. On the other hand, man is well fitted to command in the field; to appoint a woman to military command in the field would be an invitation to disaster. This is not a question of superiority or inferiority; it is question of natural capacity and proper functioning.

MARRIAGE

Some religious disciplines mistakenly esteem celibacy more exalted spiritually than conjugal life. Islam disapproves of celibacy and condemns it. The Holy Quran says:

They devised monasticism as a means of seeking Allah's pleasure. We did not prescribe it for them, and they did not observe it duly. (57:28)

The whole concept of monasticism originated in the notion that woman was an inferior type of creation and association with her was degrading and demoralizing. The Church Fathers laid the responsibility of man's fall upon woman, and represented her as being without a soul and an instrument of devil. Islam denounced this attitude, and raised woman to a position of spiritual equality with man. In contrast to the view of Christianity: Neither was man created for the woman, nor the woman for the man, Islam proclaimed, that man and woman complemented each other and were a means of mutual fulfillment. For instance it is said: "They

are a garment for you and you are a garment for them.” (2:188)

The Arabic word LIBAS used for garment - means a thing which covers another thing. And according to the Holy Quran, a garment serves a threefold purpose:

Allah says: O children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your shame, and to be an elegant dress . . . (7:27)

And then He says:

He has made for you garments which protect you from heat and the coats of mail which protect you in your wars. (16:82)

Another use of our dress is that it provides protection against heat and cold. Since the Holy Quran has used the word ‘garment’ in respect of both husband and wife, it proves beyond any shadow of doubt that they hold an equal status; their rights and duties are identical in respect of each other; and they both are bound to fulfill their obligations to each other. When God declares each of them to be a garment for the other, it means they have to discharge the following duties to each other:

1. To behave in a manner that each other's weaknesses and shortcomings remain out of sight of others.
2. To act as each other's adornment and embellishment.
3. Just as the dress protects us from the severity and inclemency of weather, in the same way the husband and wife should stick fast to each other through thick and thin, and at no time should they fall apart in adverse circumstances.

Each should serve as the rock of support to the other. According to Islamic point of view, Marriage is not an ordinary combination of two opposite sexes, nor is it only to quench one's sexual desires. It is rather a holy reunion of two inevitable life companions on whose

virtues or vices lies the prosperity or the disaster of the human society. Marriage in Islam means laying the foundation of a fabric from which emerges a benevolent and beneficial society and therefore it enjoins upon every Muslim to marry. The Holy Prophet has said: "Conjugal life is our way, he who turns aside from our way is not of us." At another time he said: "O company of the youth! he who can afford to marry should marry, for it keeps the eye cast down and keeps the man chaste; and he who cannot afford to marry should take to fasting for it will have a castrating effect upon him." According to this tradition, it is quite clear that the purpose of the marriage in Islam as far as society is concerned is to keep the society chaste, healthy and pure from the grossness and immorality.

Unfortunately the West no longer considers chastity a virtue, indeed it has become a reproach. Experimental living together and promiscuity have become the norm. Perversion and sensuality, inside and outside wedlock, are deemed the true purpose and object of sex. Woman has been degraded into a mere instrument for sexual indulgence. According to Islam the relationship between husband and wife should be characterized by grace. The Holy Quran says:

Consort with them graciously. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something in which Allah has placed much good. (4:20)

POLYGAMY

Plurality of wives is not specifically prohibited by divine command in any religion; nor, except in the case of Islam, is the number of wives restricted. Islam permits a plurality of wives but restricts their number to four; and the permission is conditioned by just treatment of wives. "But if you feel you may not be able to deal justly between them, then marry only one." (4:4) The truth is that polygamy as defined and restricted by Islam is a device

designed by the highest wisdom for the fostering of high moral values and the safeguarding of chastity both of males and females. It may be described as a beneficent moral and cultural safety valve. For lack of such a safety valve societies that have sought to enforce a rigid system of monogamy have been ripped apart by promiscuity, homosexuality, lesbianism and bestiality. Unrestricted sexual indulgence has become the norm between them, and does not even attract moral disapprobation.

Islam, being a complete code of law and a practical religion permits to take another wife under the abnormal conditions. Abnormal circumstances make their appearances every now and then. In the first place, if the wife of a person becomes a permanent invalid or suffers from a contagious disease; the object of marriage - peace of mind and availability of a loving companion - is certainly defeated if such a person does not marry another wife. There are however other reasons also which may render it necessary for a person to have one or more wives in addition to the one whom he dearly loves and who also fulfills the object of marriage. These reasons are: (1) To protect orphans; (2) To provide husbands for marriageable widows; and (3) To supplement the decreasing manhood of a family or community. The first two reasons were the main cause that Islam allows the taking of more wives than one, so that the widows and orphans may find shelter. "If you fear," says the Holy Quran, "that you will not be able to do justice to orphans, then marry women, two, three or four." (4:4)

Professions may be open up for women to enable them to earn bread, or orphanages to cater for the orphan, but the crux of the question is not the provision of bread but the provision of the home life and protection from immorality, and that question cannot be solved without polygamy.

A word from Dr. Annie Besant would not be out of place here. She says: "There is pretended monogamy in the West, but there is really polygamy without

responsibility; the "mistress" is cast off when the man is weary of her and sinks gradually to be the "woman of the street," for the first lover has no responsibility for her future and she is a hundred times worse off than the sheltered wife and mother in the polygamous home. When we see thousands of miserable women, who crowd the streets of Western towns during the night, we must surely feel that it does not lie in Western mouths to reproach Islam for its polygamy. It is better for a woman, more respectable for a woman, to live in Islamic polygamy united to one man only, with the legitimate child in her arms surrounded with respect, than to be reduced, cast out on the streets perhaps with illegitimate child outside the pale of law - unsheltered and uncared for, to become a victim of any passerby, night after night, rendered incapable of motherhood, despised by all . . ."

DIVORCE

Divorce, according to Islam, being a preventive measure against breach of peace, a device for securing an amicable settlement, and after all a salutary safeguard to protect the weaker sex from continuous ill-treatment, due to disagreement or any other reason, has justly been provided as a dissolution of an unhappy marriage which may turn out to be a burden rather than an asset and, contrary to all expectations of happiness and help, may happen to be a horror and hindrance. Regarding the divorce, one should remember what the Holy Prophet has said: "Of all the permissible things, divorce is most disliked by Allah." Again, he is reported to have said: "The curse of God rests on him who repudiates his wife capriciously."

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Of the great faiths Islam has been foremost in assigning to woman a position of economic

independence. She can enter into business, make any contract or testament in her name. She is entitled to inherit, as mother, wife, sister and daughter, a thing unknown in any other religion, civilization or legislation. She is given liberty to choose her husband. It is not lawful for a guardian to force an adult virgin into marriage. No marriage can be performed without her consent.

No other preceptor has admonished his people as did the Holy Prophet regarding the womanfolk. He said: "Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers." "The best of you is he who behaves best towards the members of his family." "He who brings up his daughters well, and makes no distinction between them and his sons, will be close to me in Paradise." "The world and all things in the world are precious but the most precious thing in the world is a virtuous woman." "The more civil and kind a Muslim is to his wife, the more perfect of faith he is." "Fear God in respect of women." "Women," said he, "is the queen of her house." "A Muslim must not hate his wife, and if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, then let him be pleased with one that is good." "When man has married he has completed one-half of his religion." "A man who has three daughters and brings them and educates them to the best of his capacity shall be entitled to Paradise."

Pierre Crabbites, in his article, "Things Muhammad Did For Woman" has rightly observed when he writes:

The Muslim woman is a driving force which was fashioned by Muhammad's mastermind . . . Muhammad, thirteen hundred years ago, assured to the mothers, wives and daughters of Islam a rank and dignity not yet generally assured to women by the laws of the West.

Peace and blessings of God be upon Muhammad the Benefactor of women. Amen.

Prophecies in the Quran

by

Dr. Hussain M. Sajid

The Holy Quran claims to be a revealed book, revealed by the Lord of the Worlds (56:81). Also, that it is alike to the previous scriptures of other Prophets. "We have sent revelation to thee as we sent revelation to Noah and the Prophets after him." (4:164) The scriptures revealed prior to the Quran, like Torah and parts of New Testament, mention the advent of forthcoming events known as prophecies. The Quran proclaims that it is revealed by the same source who is All Knowing and has knowledge of all the things past and to come, it raises a question in an inquisitive mind. Does the Quran, too, have news about the events to happen? The validity of the Quran of being a True Word of God depends, therefore, upon the presence and the fulfillment of prophecies about the future events.

When we study the Quran, seeking such information, we find that the Quran far excels other revealed scriptures in this regard. Every chapter of Quran, every part of Quran, foretells a sign. The Quran not only prophecies about the events to come, but, also, rectifies the distorted accounts of the previous people and of the nations which found their way into older scriptures. It relates the account of the past in a manner that each account it tells becomes a sign for the future. According to the Promised Messiah, it is the practice of the Quran that it prophecies in such a manner that while it relates the account of the past, the true purpose is a prophecy of the future events, just as in Chapter Joseph a similar prophecy has been related. Apparently, a story has been told, but, this prophecy is hidden there in that, like the brothers of Joseph who initially looked upon him in a derogatory manner, he, at the end, became their chief.

Similar happenings will occur in regard to the Quraish too. Similarly, those people rejected the Holy Prophet (SAW) and made him to leave Mecca but, "that who was rejected became their chief and the guide." The Quran is unique in this respect also among other scriptures. From the very first revelation, "Proclaim Thou in the name of the Lord who created." (96:2) to the last revelation, "Today, we have completed your religion." (5:4), it informs us about the events about to happen 'till the coming of the day of Judgment. Looking closely, we start with the first revelation, "Proclaim thou in the name of the Lord who created." (96:2) The very first word of the verse shows that the Quran was meant to be read and proclaimed, to be collected and put together, and conveyed to the whole world. It was so stated at such an era that there were no easy means of writing, let alone its world-wide publication. Further, it was revealed to a person, Muhammad, who could neither read nor write. But, today, it is an undeniable fact that among all religious Scriptures, the Quran is the most widely read and, thus, its fulfillment attests to the truth of the Quran.

Proclaim! And thy Lord is most generous, who
taught by the pen. (96:4-5)

This verse embodies a prophecy that the 'pen' would play a great part in committing the Quran to writing and in preserving and protecting it from being lost or interfered with and that the 'pen' will be used in proof of its superiority and truthfulness. Among all the revealed books, the Quran is the only book that was committed to pen and, thus, safeguarded. The Book of Moses was not put to writing at the time of its revelation. The Books of Abraham were not written down at the time. The Vedas were not put in writing when they were revealed to rishis; Zand and Avesta were not put to pen when revealed to Zoroaster and the New Testament was not written at the time when Jesus received his revelations. There is no book that was written down at the time of its revelation - it is only the Quran which was committed to the writing

from its very beginning. To this day it is present in the same words that were revealed to Holy Prophet. It is such a confirmed fact that no adversary of Islam, no critic of Islam can deny it.

Surely, we, ourself, have sent down this exhortation and we will most surely safeguard it.
(15:10)

This verse is a strong proof of the truth of Islam. All commentators agree that this verse was revealed in Mecca. According to Ibn Hisham, it was revealed in the 4th year of the call. It was the time which was the most taxing for the Holy Prophet and the Muslims. The Holy Prophet and his companions were besieged in Shi'b-Abi-Tabli and it was at this time that Allah promised that He will surely safeguard the Quran and its teaching and no power on earth can destroy it. The day came when the holy Prophet and his companions came out of that seige. Islam spread beyond Mecca, beyond Arabia and all over the world. Throughout the ages, the Quran was safeguarded and is being safeguarded even today.

Sir William Muir wrote in his book, **Life of Mohammad**:

What we have, though possibly created and modified by himself is still his own... We may, upon the strongest presumption, affirm that every verse in the Quran is genuine and unaltered composition of Mohammad himself."

At another place, he remarks:

There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Mohammad himself gave forth and used.

Noeldke wrote:

Slight clerical errors there may have been, but, the Quran of Othman contains none but genuine

elements though, sometimes, in very strange order. Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolation in the Quran have failed. (**Encyclop. Brit.**)

Muir admits in great dismay that "To compare their pure texts with the various readings of our scriptures is to compare things between which there is no analogy."

With the call of Prophethood came another commandment and another prophecy.

O' Messenger! Convey to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord, and if thou do it not, thou has not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect thee from men. (5:68)

The Promised Messiah has said:

It is a great miracle that Holy Prophet was not killed by any hand and is a proof of truth of Quran because it is a prophecy of Quran, 'Allah will protect you from men,' and this prophecy was written in the earlier books that the Last Prophet will not be murdered by anyone's hand. (**Badr** 14 September 1905:2)

The history of Islam is full of incidences of this Divine Protection of the Prophet that are too numerous to mention here. While the Prophet was still in Mecca he received the revelation, "Most surely He who had made the teaching of Quran binding on thee will bring back to thy place of return." (28.86) This verse not only revealed that the Prophet would have to migrate from Mecca, but, also, contained the prophecy that, after his migration, he would return to Mecca as a victor. Nobody passing through the circumstances which surrounded the Holy Prophet at the time when this verse was revealed could have guessed that, after he had been forced to depart from Mecca, he would return there in triumph and so it did happen.

Among the many prophecies revealed at Mecca, foretelling the final victory of Islam, was the prophecy, "The hosts shall soon be routed and shall turn their backs in flight." (54:46) This verse is from Chapter **Al-Qamar** and this sura, according to all reports, was revealed in Mecca at least three years before The Hijra. This prophecy is about the crushing defeat which the Meccan army suffered in the Battle of Badr. On that day, the odds were so heavy against the Muslims that, when the fighting began, the Prophet prayed to God in utmost humility and extreme agony in a tent set up for him for this purpose, in the memorable words:

O' Lord, I humbly beseech thee to fulfill Thy covenant and Thy promise. If this small band of Muslims were destroyed, Thou wilt never be worshipped again on this earth.

After having finished the prayer, the Prophet came out of the tent and, facing the field of battle, recited this verse, "The hosts shall soon be routed and shall turn their backs in flight." Thus he reminded his followers that the Hour promised in the Meccan revelation has come. The battle began, three hundred-thirteen Muslims, most of them inexperienced and unused to warfare, and nearly all of them poorly equipped, stood before a number three times as large and all of them were well-equipped, seasoned soldiers. In a few hours, most of the leaders of the Quraish were killed and their bodies were dragged along and thrown in a pit. The Meccan army fled in miserable haste, leaving behind their dead as well as some prisoners. The Holy Prophet went up to the brink of the pit. Addressing the dead bodies, he is reported to have said, "Have you found true what your Lord had promised you? I have, indeed, found true what my Lord had promised me!"

Again, at Mecca, while Islam and the Muslims were still the targets of Arab persecution, news arrived that the Persians had defeated the Romans in the battle. This occasioned great rejoicing among Meccans, for the

Persians were idolators and the Roman were Christians. On this occasion, the Prophet received revelation.

The Romans had been vanquished in a neighboring land, but, within a few years of their defeat, they would again be victorious. (30:4-5)

When this revelation was announced among the Meccans, they laughed and jeered at the Muslims. Some of them laid a wager of a hundred camels with Abu Bakr that the prophecy would not be fulfilled. Events indicated that there was very little chance of the Romans defeating the Persians as their defeat in Syria was followed by further defeats and the Roman army was pushed back by the Persian army to the shores of the Sea of Marmora. The Roman Empire was reduced to the size of a small state. The word of God was, however, bound to be fulfilled. Within nine years, the Romans won a complete victory and the Persians were put to flight. They retreated into Persia and the Romans reoccupied their Asiatic and African possessions.

About the fulfillment of the prophecies, the Quran teaches us that, "For every prophecy, there is a fixed time and soon will you come to know." (6:68)

The fulfillment of prophecies did not come to an end with the passing of the Prophet. It was foretold, in the Quran, that not all the prophecies will be fulfilled in his lifetime. For example, "And whether we show thee in thy lifetime, the fulfillment of some of the things with which we threaten them or whether we cause thee to die, it makes little difference, for on thee lies only the delivery of the message, and on Us the reckoning." (13:41)

The Quran narrates the accounts of many prophets and the nations to which they were sent as messengers. One of the great law-bearing prophets was Moses, who was sent to the Pharaoh for the deliverance of Bani-Israel from bondage in Egypt. Moses was born in the time of Ramses II and was brought up by him, but, it was in the reign of his son, Merneptah (Meneptah) that he was

entrusted with the mission of a prophet. The Quran relates the account as follows:

We brought the children of Israel across the sea, and Pharoah and his hosts pursued them wrongfully and aggressively. When the Pharoah perceived he was drowning, he faltered: I believe that there is no god but He in whom the children of Israel believe, and I submit to Him. We passed judgment on him. What! Now! While thou was disobedient before this and wast of those who create disorder. So, this day we will save thee in thy body alone that thou mayest be a sign to those who come after thee." (10:91-93)

Of all Scriptures, the Quran alone mentions this historic fact. The Bible makes no mention of it, nor does any book of history. But, in what wonderful manner the word of God has proved true! After the lapse of more than 3,000 years, the body of that Pharoah has been discovered and identified, which established beyond controversy, the fact that after he was drowned, his dead body was recovered and was embalmed and preserved. Through the ages, it escaped destruction and was preserved to serve as a Sign to mankind and to confirm the truth of Quran.

One of the prophecies of Quran, relating to later times, was the prophecy of the construction of canals joining two seas.

In 55-20, 21, we read, "He has made the two bodies of water flow. They will one day meet. Between them there is, at present, a barrier they cannot encroach one upon the other."

The two bodies of water may be the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea or the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. The verse embodies a great prophecy which was remarkably fulfilled by the construction of the Suez and the Panama Canals. The world had to wait for thirteen long centuries to see the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Among the prophecies for the later times are the prophecies relating to transport:

(1) "And He has created horses and mules and asses that you may ride them and as a source of beauty. And He will create what you do not yet know." (16:9)

It foretells new means of transport which were yet unknown to man. Railway trains, steamships, cars, planes, and now, space ships are ample proof of fulfillment of this prophecy of the Quran.

(2) "And we will create for them the like there of where on they will ride." (36-43)

The fulfillment of this verse is self-evident.

Chapter 81, Sura **Al-Takwir** revealed in the sixth year of the call or even earlier. Its every verse is a prophecy which today's man has witnessed to be fulfilled. "When the sun is wrapped up," that is, when there will be spiritual darkness all over the world, the light of the Spiritual Sun, the Prophet will become temporarily dim, or, "When the stars are obscured," that is when the religious leaders become corrupt and cease to exercise any influence. Further: "And when the mountains are made to move."

When the mountains will be blown away by dynamite and the roads will be made through them or when the authority of rulers will become undermined.

Also, "When the she-camel, ten-month pregnant, are abandoned." The reference is to the replacement of camels by better and swifter means of transport.

Further:

"And when the wild beasts are gathered together." (81:6)

When animals will be collected in zoological gardens or when primitive people be settled in organized civil communities or when they will be compelled to leave their homeland.

Again:

"And when the rivers are drained away." (81:7)

"And when various people are brought together." (81:8)
Formation of parties, easy accessibility through travels, communications. "And when books are spread abroad." (81:9) Vast circulation of newspapers, journals, and books, library system, reading rooms. "And when the heaven is laid bare." (81:10)

Vast strides in the science of astronomy, space ship travel, satellite, Voyager I and II.

And among others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (62:4)

This verse signifies that the Prophet will be raised among other people who have not yet joined his immediate followers. Holy Prophet explained the verse, that the meaning of the second advent of the Prophet will be in the person of the Promised Messiah in the latter days. Says Abu Hurairah, "One day, we were sitting with the Prophet when Sura Juma was revealed. I asked the Holy Prophet, 'Who are the people to whom the words and among others from among them who have not yet joined them?' Salman the Persian was sitting among us. Upon my repeatedly asking him the same question, the Prophet put his hand on Salman and said, 'If Faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a descendent of these would surely find it' (**Bukhari**). Hazrat Mirza-Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya movement and the Promised Messiah, was of Persian descent. Thus, the Quran and the Hadith both seem to agree that the present verse refers to the second Advent of the Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah.

Again:

He it is Who has sent His messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners with God resent it. (61:10)

Most commentators of the Quran, like Ibin Jarir, author of **Tafsir Qadri** and **Bahar-al-Anwar**; **Tafsir Safi** and Hazrat Ismael Shaheed in his book **Minsabi-Khilafat**, agreed that this verse applies to the Promised Messiah in whose time all religions will make their appearance and the superiority of Islam over all of them will be established. Due to the mission of the Promised Messiah and his works, the excellence of the ideals and principles of Islam have already begun to be increasingly recognized. The day is not far off when Islam will triumph over all.

Hazrat Musleh-Maood wrote in his book, **Introduction to the Study of Holy Quran**, about the forthcoming triumph of Islam. He writes that the Sura **Al-Kahf** contains prophecies relating to the rise and progress of the Christian nations as well as their naval might and hegemony over the greater part of the earth and their mutual wars. The ultimate victory and triumph of Islam have also been foretold. The greater part of the prophecies regarding the rise and fall of the Christian nations has been fulfilled. The next stage is the fulfillment of the prophecy relating to the victory and triumph of Islam. A Western non-Muslim, judging only from the present condition of Muslims, would laugh at this, but God, who revealed these prophecies and Who has fulfilled those which related to the Christian nations, will surely cause this prophecy relating to the triumph of Islam to be fulfilled. The days of victory of Islam are at hand. The rays of the Sun of Islam are penetrating the thick curtains of darkness. God's angels are descending from the heavens. The earth is no doubt in the grip of Satanic powers but the days of the clear triumph of Divine forces against the forces of Satan are rapidly drawing near. The Unity of God will then be firmly established and mankind will realize and admit that the Quran alone is capable of making peace between God and man and of establishing justice and fair dealing between man and man and of setting up the Kingdom of God upon earth.

The Mystical Moses

by

Rafi Yahya A. Sharif

A helpless infant floats gently along the bank of a Nile tributary; an Unseen Hand guides his reed cradle to its rendezvous with destiny.

The Hebrew baby had been set adrift to evade a death decreed by Ramses II, ruler of Egypt. But the Pharaoh's federal program was dwarfed by a Greater Plan for the people of Israel. The basket with its endearing cargo is discovered by a dame of the pharoanic household and brought into its guarded precincts for adoption. He will accept the milk of no Egyptian nursemaid, and her true identity unknown, the real mother of Moses is discovered to be an acceptable nursemaid. Thus mother and child are miraculously re-united under the Divine Eye. Infancy is a beginning, and thus begins the unfolding of the Divine drama decimating one nation and elevating another.

The "story of Moses" is well known among all faiths, but what does it reveal to the seeker who looks beyond the veil of historic narrative?

The infant represents a new birth, a new state of being for the Nation Israel. Like the baby, the Nation is to be rescued from its place as a captive people. Moses is to be well reared in Egyptian high society, but from the first day he enters the royal household, he rejects the breast of the foreign nursemaid and accepts his nourishment only from his own mother, symbol of his monotheistic inheritance. From what does the infant turn away?

Egypt or Mizraim represents a lower condition of life into which Israel had descended. It is the land of the lower consciousness ruled by the Pharaoh who symbolizes the lower mind. Moses is the key to the elevation of the national soul; he is to liberate not only the bodies of the Israelis, as it ordinarily understood, but he is to liberate

their souls and minds. It is a spiritual drama of the heavenly spheres with eternal lessons for those who would understand.

We know the prominent place of Israel in their own national-faith and equally, in the Christian faith. They are also the first national group addressed in the **Qur'an Sharif** and the prophets and history of Israel provides the foundation for much of the Divine Guidance found therein. Prophet Moses is one of the prophets most frequently referred to by Almighty Allah. But what were they doing in Egypt, in the land of darkness?

Israel, the bearer of Allah's Unity, had been drawn down into the land of the Nile in search of food as related in the account of Prophet Joseph who saved Egypt from starvation through revelation. With Prophet Jacob, the first seventy Hebrews settled in Goshen near the Isthmus of Suez. Seventy, in spiritual terms, indicates wholeness and completion indicating that all elements of the Nation were present.

As years passed, the Egyptians became the most powerful nation on earth. They boasted a written language, advanced agricultural methods, and great achievements in architecture. The conquering army of Ramses II dominated Africa and part of Asia.

In contrast to the "civilized" great men of Egypt symbolized by their colossal temples, pyramids, sphynxes, and obelisks, the Israelis prospered as shepherds along the borders as a very separate culture.

The Pharoah of the time, who "knew not Joseph" demanded slave laborers for his ambitious federal building projects and resolved to force them into serving the public works. Ever since they were invaded by the Hyksos shepherd-kings from Syria in 2100 B.C., the Egyptians loathed shepherd peoples. The Hyksos conquered lower Egypt and transformed the entire

population through intermarriage. More important, the Israelis persisted in their rejection of state cult-worship of dead kings and animals and clung to their own traditions and faith in Divine Unity. These border peoples were also suspect, that in time of national emergency they were prone to make alliances with Egypt's enemies.

Taken into the interior, they were set to work in the damp stone quarries, lime pits, and brick fields to bear their burdens under scorching sun. Away from the desert and wilderness source of strength where indeed, Allah was their only King, the Israelis grew weaker and weaker, according to Jewish accounts. On the other hand, the Hebrews seem to have grown from a small clan to a sizeable population.

In reaction, Pharoah instituted an Israeli "Zero-Population Growth" program; hence the abandonment of the infant Moses to the river waters.

The infant develops, and reaching full strength and maturity, Moses is guided into an incident that becomes a turning point in his life. Reared and educated by the nobles, how does he come to be called into the service of Israel? Observing an oppressive task-master beating an Israeli worker, he responds and accidentally kills the Egyptian. It was unintentional - he used only his hand. The act decisively drove him back to his people. Praying for forgiveness, he fled from Egypt to escape the vengeance of the city fathers, from a second decree of death.

Moses goes to Midian on the Sinai penninsula and engages in that well-known profession of the prophets - tending sheep. Indeed, he is to become a shepherd of souls and his training commences upon his flight from the land of corruption. He is to be purified in the Arabian desert for a period of eight years. He consents to labor for the Quranic prophet Shuaib and arranges to marry his daughter.

The numerical conception of eight is transcendent. Seven means completion of the cycle and eight is going beyond the cycle. Thus Moses works through the eight to a higher plan of spiritual awareness in preparation for the awesome task before him. He then sets out on a journey with his family and perceives a fire in the direction of "the Mount" which alludes to the Divine Law to be given at Har Sinai. He instructs his family to wait behind, so that he would have the requisite privacy to commune with Allah Al-Mujib.

Here in the valley of Tuwa, Moses is spoken to by Allah; he removes his shoes. In dreams and visions, shoes signify worldly relationships. He is to leave behind all worldly ties and bannish all thoughts linking him to the world. He is thus prepared and Allah Al-Qadir informs him in a vision at the "burning bush" that he has been chosen to serve Allah alone as prophet and messenger. He will oppose persecution and nothing will stand in his way.

Two of the miracle-weapons are bestowed upon the prophet in the course of this experience. He is given a rod and shown its power. In the language of visions, the rod signifies the people of the messenger. If he casts down his burden of leadership over the people - the rod - the serpent, meaning the dreadful consequences of such an act - would then appear. Secondly, the rod becoming a serpent means that his people, Israel, would gain snake-like vigorous new life and quick movement through the leadership of Moses and would be the deadly means of destruction for Egyptian idolatry and wickedness.

Moses is told to place his hand under his arm-pit and withdraw it. It then appears white. When a bird places its head under its wing in a dream, it signifies protection. Moses is to keep his people close under his care and Divine Protection. They will be purified of Egyptian influences and raised to righteousness, radiating Holy Light like his white, or luminous hand. It is a promise

from Allah to the generation of Moses. Like the minaratul-Masih, or white minaret of the Promised Messiah of Islam, the white or luminous hand signifies powerful signs and arguments to be manifested.

Pharoah becomes more and more overbearing. He decides that the Hebrew slaves are lagging in their work and cynically has them build a tower requiring back-breaking labor. In derision, he announces that he will ascend the tower to have a look at the "God of Moses." In this supreme act of arrogance and ignorance, he truly invites the wrath of Allah.

It is the immutable law of Allah, that wrong-doers never prosper, and Allah sends Moses, strengthened by his brother Aaron, to intercede for Bani Israel and call upon the Pharoah to release them from bondage. They dutifully warn Pharoah of the punishment in store for him. He responds by announcing at court that the foreigner is seeking to undermine his rule by means of clever magic. He summons the magicians or wise men of his realm to confront Moses on the magical front at the time of a particular national festival attended by throngs of Egyptians at the royal palace. The atmosphere is attended by the special awe and pomp of the feast and all present witness the ensuing contest.

Moses has the option of demonstrating first, but instead orders his opponents to cast their magic first. This illustrates that prophets are never offensive, but only contend with others in defense of faith. The magicians of the Nile kingdom threw their staves and cords and they appeared to be full of dynamism. The forces of evil ever appear to have power and vitality, but come to naught because Satan is subject to the Higher Power of Allah Al-Qadir. The rod of Moses, when cast, "swallows" the works of the Egyptians. Thus before Pharoah and his hosts of witnesses, Moses deploys his rod and the sign of the White Hand and utterly beats all of the competitors.

Being wise men, the magicians, according to the Qur'an Sharif, then recognize the power of Allah, and prostrate before the "God of Moses" in front of the assembly. Pharoah enraged, retorts that these were the secret agents of Moses and threatens them with crucifixion. They do not budge from their newfound faith and refuse to prefer Pharoah over "Him that created us." What a glorious testimony!

Action begets reaction. The ruler reacts to his loss of face. Things become even worse for Israel, and for Pharoah - the deluge, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, the blood, and the darkness are visited on Egypt.

Moses was confident. He knew of the promise to his ancestor, the great Prophet Abraham, who represents the spiritualized mind in the cosmos of prophethood. The very first divine command received by Abraham was "Go out!" He was told to go out from the land of his fathers, from the familiar places, and to embark upon a spiritual journey. He was thus to rise up from his lower natural self to a spiritualized state, a promised land. His going to the area of what is now Mecca to establish the spiritual center of the earth for all of humanity was the actualization of this journey.

Now through Moses, there is to be another manifestation of this spiritual "going out." Leaving Egypt means for Israel, to leave behind the world or place of lowly desires to advance to a higher plane of spiritual consciousness. The exodus of Israeli history, like the hijra of the greatest Prophets, can best benefit the seeker of today if he undertakes a similar personal journey. The soul needs to respond to the Divine Command and experience a re-birth by performing an exodus from the influences of one's own lower desires, forces, and emotions. Life to the Friend of Allah is such a journey and is crowned with success only when the seeker finds the promised land of self-control and spiritual realization, when he earns nearness to Allah Al-Muhaimin.

At times, rivers must be crossed on such journeys. In ancient times, there were no "Jews." The Bani Israel were commonly known as Hebrews, "those who come from across the river." In spiritual parlance, rivers represent the emotional nature in action - flowing, ebbing, rising and falling, and at times flooding the banks. In the context of the events related, overflowing of the Nile means free reign of passions and loss of control. Pharoah lost all self-control and demanded that he be worshiped as a deity; he was drowned in the river of his passions, the Yam Suf or sea of reeds.

The meaning of seven has already been noted. Moses was the prophet-leader of the Bani Israel of the seventh generation after Abraham. The prophet of this generation was destined to be the recipient of a new code of law by which the nation was to be guided, and through which, they were to become a blessing and guidance for other peoples as well. The previous age was to end with the revelation of that Torah and Israel was redeemed from lowly subjugation. They had been tried and tried again, but Moses on Mount Sinai and by virtue of his faithful service, he gained nearness to Almighty Allah. In the Qur'an, twenty attributive qualities are given to Prophet Moses, second only to Prophet Abraham about whom twenty-nine attributes are stated. He is a noble and wise prophet, chosen by Allah as His messenger and guided by Him. His actions were full of goodness and he was entirely faithful to his trust. He held a most lofty station in the sight of Allah and was his believing servant. He was physically strong and quite able in rendering judgments. He was given dominion and clear and manifest authority, and he left a legacy of good after him. He possessed a universal quality as a messenger of the Lord of All the Worlds and was victorious in his life's mission.

He was almighty conqueror of the human soul and exemplar for friends of the journey. All faiths and

peoples honor Moses, the prophet of Allah, peace be upon him.

But dear reader, always bear in mind, that you will not have to account for the works of Moses.

Current Topics:

Islam And Politics

The Islamic world view rests on the primacy of religion as the organizing as well as the governing factor of all life. In this context, Muslims affirm that while Christianity can separate between the temporal and the spiritual realms, in Islam the will of God for humanity as revealed in the Qur'an and preached and implemented by the Prophet Muhammad encompasses all facets of communal life: political, military, social, economic, educational, moral and cultural. Unlike western liberal theories of society that relegate religion to one aspect of culture, Islam posits a normative system in which religion is the all-encompassing and integrating factor that provides communal solidarity, regulating all aspects of life as it transforms society in order to implement the will of God in the world.

This affirmation is based on the Islamic precedent of what is perceived as a utopian society experienced in history between A.D. 622-632. Upon his emigration to Medina, the Prophet Muhammad initiated an Islamic socio-political entity, which serves as a prototype that all subsequent committed Muslims should attempt to emulate. Membership in this society was based on the commitment to the worship of the one God, the affirmation of loyalty to the teachings of Muhammad, and a recognition of his authority (both prophetic and political) as the final messenger of God. Thus Muslims constitute one community, one nation, and one brotherhood that transcends all tribal, racial, or national origin.

To enter Islam is not only to assume a new identity, but also to affirm that God is the ruler of history and of the universe and that the Muslim community is commissioned to witness to this truth and to strive to bring about a new social order committed to equality and brotherhood and the readication of justice and oppression in the world.

Muslim political theory has consistently affirmed this ideal, charging the Islamic community and its ruler (the successor to the Prophet) with the task of bringing about a just society which prescribes that which is good and prohibits evil. Consequently, the ruler is to be elected for his qualities of piety and knowledge of Islam, be charged with the administration of justice and of the law, and be accountable to the Muslims for his actions. He is the servant of the law, and in no way above it.

While the first four successors to the Prophet (Caliphs) were elected by their peers, Islamic political practice deviated from the ideal as the rulers assumed royal titles and demeanor, exercising despotic power over the community, indulging in opulence and placing themselves above the law. This manipulation of power was extended to the perpetuation of the ruling family by the designation of their heirs as successors. Legitimacy of the ruler was acquired by military might rather than merit, piety of a democratic process. The religious leaders acquiesced, placing the welfare of the community as a united entity above ideological strife. Meanwhile, they were integrated into the legal system which co-opted them as employees of the empire.

Islam And Politics In The Modern World

During the past centuries, all Muslim peoples have been conquered, ruled or dominated by Western European forces. The expansion of Europe into the world of Islam came at the height of European confidence in the white man's "superiority" and the white man's "burden" to civilize the rest of humanity. This ideological

framework was supported by an economic imperative dictated by European industrial developments: the search for natural resources to be used in keeping the factories running, as well as the availability of markets for the manufactured products. It was also encouraged by the missionary movement of the Christian Church that sought to convert the whole world to Christ during the century.

This orientalist-colonial-missionary venture through its challenge of Muslim countries raised questions not only about the adequacy of existent political and economic Islamic structures at the time, but through its intellectual efforts condemned the ideologies of the Islamic order, as well as the religion, as inferior and invalid for modern life.

Encouraged by European occupation forces who lauded them as reformers and champions of liberal Islam, several religious leaders attempted to show in their writings that Islamic political, economic and social law was always advocating what the Europeans were espousing at the time. In this effort, their utility to the governments installed by the colonial powers was to islamize as well as to legitimize the "reforms" these rulers sought to implement in their developing countries in order to achieve parity with the West, at all times using western ideologies as norms to be emulated.

Among these ideologies was that of nationalism appropriated by the elites as a means of engendering among members of the nation a solidarity that transcends religious as well as racial particularity. While all national states with a majority of Muslims continue to affirm in their constitution that Islam is either the basis of the nation or the religion of the state, for example, Arab nationalism in focusing on Arab achievements relegated Islamic solidarity to a secondary place. The brotherhood was now defined by country of residence, language facility, and cultural

identity rather than by religion, rendering obsolete the classical Muslim political theory of defining membership in the nation. Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Arabs would be brothers in the Arab nation, while the Muslims of Pakistan, India, Indonesia, etc. . . . were the foreigners.

Since the fifties, Islamic nations have been challenged by Marxist ideologies that gained substantial support among elites that have been disenchanted with the "liberal capitalist experiment." These have led some religious leaders to redefine Islamic polity in socialist terminology at all times, showing its origin and validity firmly grounded in Islam.

These efforts have been rejected by those who affirm that Islamic principles must proceed from Islamic sources. They accuse the modernizers, whether "Capitalist" or "Marxist," of compromising the truth and attempting to manipulate the Islamic sources to legitimate alien ideologies. These are the voices of Islamic revival that advocate a return to the basic principles of Islam and to establish a nation, based on justice and equality, that seeks to implement God's will on earth rather than seeking approval of East or West.

The voice of Islamic political revival appears to be gaining advocates throughout the Muslim world among those who perceive that neither Capitalist nor Marxist systems have developed a just nation. The moral and ethical bankruptcy of both societies is cited as convincing evidence that systems devised by human beings are doomed to failure because they do not proceed from the word and will of God.

The return to Islamic ideals is gaining support among a growing number of educated youths who are alienated from their governments for a variety of reasons. It is also espoused by those who are unable to participate in the economic upsurge experienced in some Muslim

countries. Thus, Islamic revivalist ideology has appropriated the role of the opposition in various Muslim countries, while it is being used as the ideology legitimating existent regimes in countries like Libya, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

While there appears to be a growing consensus that fidelity to Islam and Islamic principles will lead to a just society as the Qur'an promises, there is no consensus about significant questions as, e.g., who the ruler is to be and how he is elected. Many of those who are in full agreement on the necessity of "an Islamic order," differ in opinion as to what this notion implies and how Islamic polity can be articulated and implemented in society.

(Professor Yvonne Haddad of the Hartford Seminary in the Newsletter of Task Force on Christian-Muslim Relations, November 1981)

Why Christmas Got Moved From Spring

If our holiday calendars stuck to historical accuracy instead of tradition, we'd be singing "Green Christmas" and celebrating Jesus's birth in spring instead of December.

All the Biblical passages about Christmas, after all, talk about the shepherds watching their flocks at night, something shepherds did in the spring - not winter - because they had to stay up at night to watch all the newborn lambs.

To understand why we celebrate Western civilization's most festive holiday in late December, first imagine the primitive peoples of the Northern Hemisphere who, not having television or movies, spent a lot watching the sun and skies.

About this time every December, there would be a major consternation when days grew shorter and shorter, raising fears that the sun might be leaving for a new part of the universe. The shortest day of the year is December 21 but, because of the peculiarities of the Earth's elliptical orbit, it takes a few days before the trend toward more daylight becomes readily apparent.

So finally, a few days after December 21, days grow discernibly longer and, with the promise of more daylight ahead, the worried tribes would have reason to break out the brew and celebrate.

By the time of Rome, these celebrations were formalized into Saturnalia, honoring Saturn, the god of seed and sowing. All military operations ceased, schools closed and slaves were temporarily freed, sometimes exchanging places with their masters.

The celebration traditionally started on December 17 but, in the more lusty days of the empire, royal decree expanded the party into a seven-day affair, ending on December 24.

Because being a Christian in those days was no way to assure longevity, the plucky followers of Christ learned that it was best to blend their own celebrations into the parties of their masters. Thus, Christmas celebrations fell into late December.

Some scholars also note that followers of Mithra, the Persian god of light, believed their deity was born on December 25. Because Eastern religions exerted a powerful influence on early Christianity, some think the Christians simply borrowed the December 25 date for their own calendar.

*Randy Shilts in
San Francisco Chronicle,
December 24, 1981*

**AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, INC.
U.S.A.**

Washington, D.C. (Headquarters)

2141 Leroy Pl., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008
202-232-3737

New York

1064 Union St., Brooklyn, NY 11225
212-773-7103

Dayton

637 Randolph St., Dayton, OH 45408
312-268-5512

Chicago

4448 South Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60653
312-268-8281

St. Louis

4401 Oakwood St., St. Louis, MO 63121
314-381-4850

Detroit

8218 Wyoming, Detroit, MI 48204
313-934-8338

AHMADDIYYA MUSLIM MISSIONS

AFRICA:

BENIN P.O. Box 69, Portonova.
GAMBIA P.O. Box 383, Banjul.
 Tel: 608
GHANA P.O. Box 2327, Accra (OSU New Estates). Tel: 76845
IVORY COAST B.P. 3416, Adjame, Abidjan.
KENYA P.O. Box 40554, Nairobi (Fort Hall Road). Tel: (010-254) 225091. Telex: c/o 22278.
LIBERIA P.O. Box 618, Monrovia (9 Lynch Street).
MAURITIUS P.O. Box 6 (Rose Hill), Mauritius.
NIGERIA P.O. Box 418, Lagos (45 Idumagbo Avenue). Tel: 20602
SIERRA LEONE P.O. Box 353, Freetown. Tel: 40699/22617
SOUTH AFRICA Mr. M.G. Ebrahim, P.O. Box 4195, Cape Town (Darut-Tabligh-il Islami).
TANZANIA P.O. Box 376, Dar es Salaam (Libya Street). Tel: 21744
UGANDA P.O. Box 98, Kampala, Uganda.
ZAMBIA P.O. Box 2345, Lusaka.

NORTH AMERICA:

CANADA Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 1306 Wilson Ave., Downsview, Ont. M3M-1H8, Canada. Tel: 416-249-3420

SOUTH AMERICA:

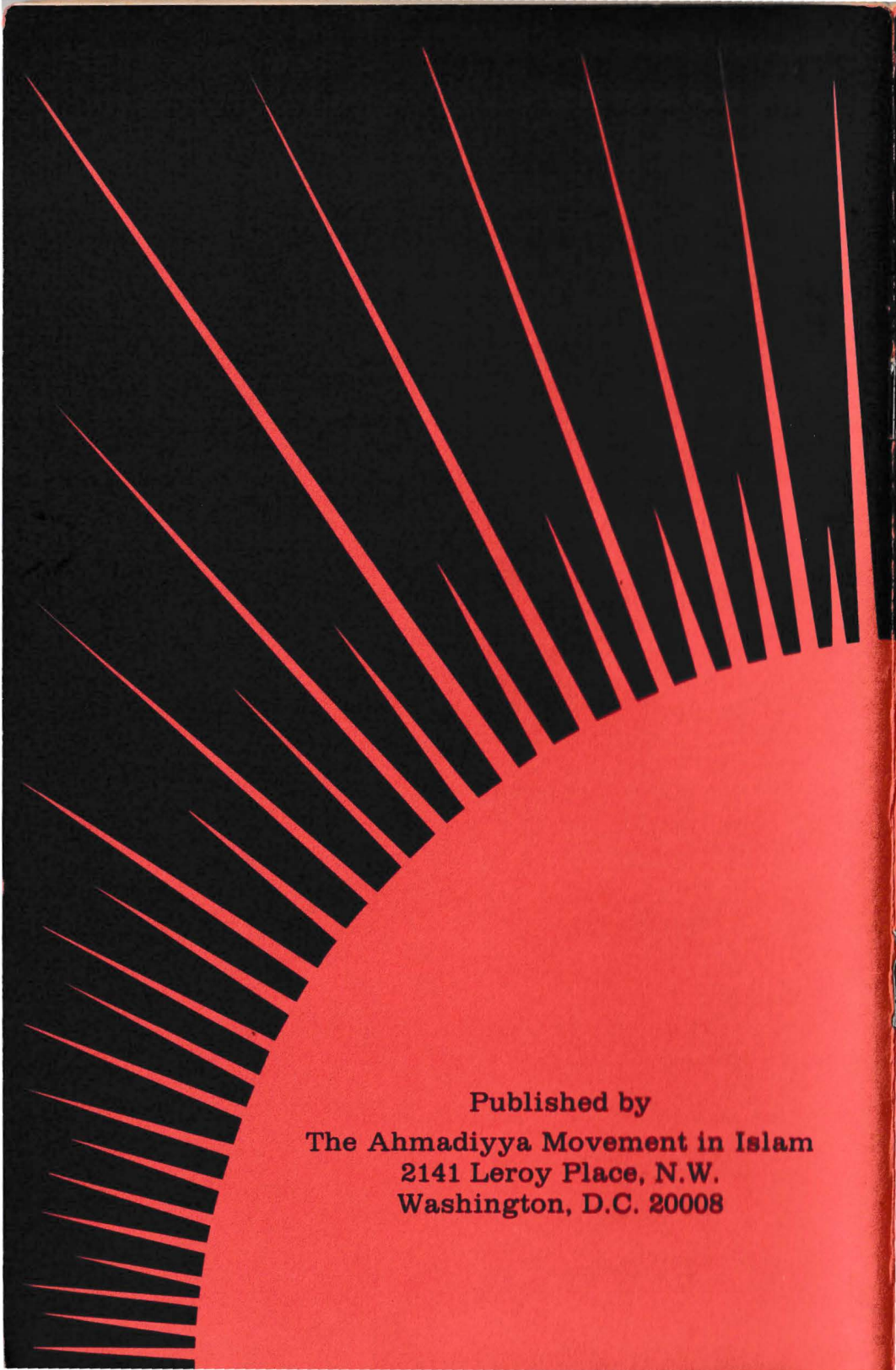
GUYANA Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 198 Oronoque and Almond Streets, P.O. Box 736, Georgetown. Tel: 02-67634
SURINAME Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Ephraimszegenweg, 26 P.O. Box 2106, Paramaribo.
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO Freeport Mission Road, Upper Carapichaima, Trinidad, W.I.

ASIA:

BURMA 191-28th Street, Rangoon.
FIJI P.O. Box 3758, Samabula (82 Kings Road), Suva. Tel: (010-879) 38221
INDIA Darul Masih, Qadian. Tel: 36.
INDONESIA Jalan Balikpapan 1, No. 10, Djakarta Pusat 1/13. Tel: 36 5342
JAPAN Ahmadiyya Center, 643-1 Aza Yamanoda, O-Aze Issha, Idaka-Cho, Meito-Ku, Nagoya 465, Japan. Tel (052) 730-1868: Cable Ahmadiyya Nagoya
PAKISTAN (Headquarters) Rabwah, Distt. Jhang.
PHILIPPINES Haji M. Ebbah, Simunul, Bongao, Sulu.
SINGAPORE 111 Onan Rd., Singapore 15.
SRI LANKA Colombo M. E. M. Hasan, 24 San Sebastian Street, Ratnum Road, Colombo 12.

EUROPE:

DENMARK Eriksminde Alle 2, Hvidovre-Copenhagen. Tel: (010-451) 753502
GERMANY Die Moschee, Babenhausen, Landstrasse, 25, Frankfurt. Tel: (010-49 611) 653122
HOLLAND De Moschee, Oostduinlaan, 79, Den Haag. Tel: (010-3170) 245902 Telex: 33574 Inter NLA 30C
NORWAY Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Frogner VN 53, Oslo.
SPAIN Mission Ahmadiyya del Islam, Escoriaza 6, 6° B, Villaverde Cruce, Madrid-21. Tel: (010-341) 796222
SWEDEN Nasir Moske Islams Ahmadiyya Forsamling, Tolvskillingsgatan 1. S-414 82 Goteborg, Sverige. Tel: (010-46 31) 414044
SWITZERLAND Mahmud Moschee, 323, Forschstrasse 8008, Zurich. Tel: (010-41 1) 535570. Telex: 58378 MPTCH Islam 374/XA
UNITED KINGDOM 16 Gressenhall Road, London SW18 5QL. Tel: 01-874 6298. Telex: 28604 Ref. 1292

A stylized red sunburst or fan-like shape originates from the bottom left corner, expanding towards the top right. It consists of numerous thin, straight red lines radiating from a common point. The background is solid black.

Published by
The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam
2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008